

Montana Newsletter

Montana State Library

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News

STATE DOCUMENTS COLLECTION



Vol. 15 No. 6

NOVEMBER/DECEMBER 1986

Libraries and the Legislature

On January 5, 1987, the 50th session of the Montana legislature convenes. The Montana Library Association's Legislative Committee is pleased to introduce an Omnibus State Aid Bill. Many years in the planning, the Omnibus State Aid Bill would provide funds for public libraries, funds for a Statewide Library Card, and funds for increased Federation support. Aid to public libraries would be per capita and based on geographical area. A part of the bill is aimed at recognizing the costs associated with interlibrary loan and the need to reimburse for those costs. It also will include a statewide library card.

A strong maintenance of effort clause will be included in the bill to ensure that libraries do not experience any decrease in current funding as a result of State Aid.

The Committee is now conferring with the Cultural Advocacy lobbyist to determine a sponsor for the bill. The Montana Library Association Legislative Committee is confident that along with the proposed changes to library law in the 1989 Ses-

sion, this Omnibus State Aid Bill will help all Montana libraries face the challenges ahead.

For further information, contact Debbie Schlesinger, 442-2380 at the Lewis & Clark Library, Helena.

Report from
Debbie Schlesinger
Montana Library
Association

Censorship Packets for Montana's Libraries

The M.L.A. Intellectual Freedom Committee has collected a packet of materials to use in combating censorship in Montana. The materials are available free to anyone in the library community.

The total packet contains approximately 200 pages of information on preventing future censorship problems within your community; preparing for the problems that are going to come anyway; and how to handle them when they arrive. The materials are also useful as background information for preparing programs on censorship to be given to local groups and organizations.

The three largest publications included are How to Defuse Censorship, by

the Montana Association of Teachers of English and Language Arts; the North Dakota Intellectual Freedom Handbook for Libraries, by the Intellectual Freedom Committee of the North Dakota Library Association; and The "Book Burners" and You, by J. Weston Watch, Publisher. The other materials are short articles, lists, and suggestions that the committee felt were important to the Montana situation.

Besides the groups mentioned above, special thanks go to the Helena, Kalispell and Libby School districts; the Montana Education Association, the Montana Library Association, and the Montana State Library; and to the 1986 Intellectual Freedom Committee members who gave of their time and effort to produce these packets.

Packets may be ordered free through Sheila Cates, Coordinator, Library Development, Montana State Library, 1515 E. 6th Ave., Helena, MT 59620, 444-3115.



Montana Faxnet Project

The State Law Library of Montana, working with other Helena area libraries, has received a grant from the Fred Meyer Charitable Trust Foundation. The purpose of the project is to demonstrate the speed with which documents can be delivered when information is requested. The program, called the Montana Faxnet Project, will link information sites together by using a telefacsimile unit which in outward appearances resembles a photocopier. The difference is the ability of the facsimile to send and receive copies over ordinary phone lines. For the duration of the project, data will be collected to demonstrate effectiveness of such a system, volume of use and user demographics.

Six telefacsimile units will be permanently placed in Helena at the following sites:

State Law Library - 444-3603
Shodair Medical Library - 443-0320
Carroll College Library - 442-1295
Lewis & Clark Library - 442-2476
Legislative Council Library - 444-3036
Montana State Library - 444-5612.

This system will first be available during the 1987 Legislative Session. A proposal is under consideration to place two units at the State Capitol. Two units at the Capitol would mean legislators could communicate with constituents as well as Montanans sending testimony, etc., to their legislators. The Legislative Administrative Committee will make a final decision by mid-December.

The intent of the Montana Faxnet Project is to place facsimile units in areas that represent the following sectors: business, legal, education, health and government. After the library network has been demonstrated, machines will be moved to information sites that represent the legal and business sector.

The first round of placements are at the following sites:

Miles City Public Library
Bozeman Public Library
Parmlly Billings Library
Great Falls Public Library
Roosevelt County Library (Wolf Point)
Dawson Community College (Glendive)
Butte-Silver Bow Library
Flathead County Free Library (Kalispell)
Havre-Hill County Library
Columbus High School Library
Department of Commerce Library (Helena)

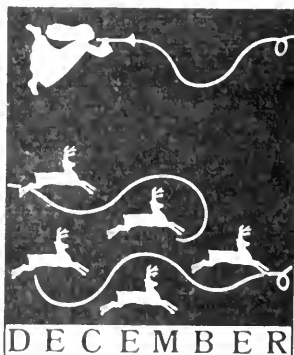
The Faxnet Project is also cooperating with one of the Kellogg sites placing a faxnet at the Hamilton Public Library for five months because both programs are designing document delivery systems and both are working in rural areas.

For more information contact: Linda Brander, Project Director, State Law Library, Helena, MT. Phone 444-2427.

Legislative Day

Montana Library Association's Biennial Library Legislative Day has been scheduled in Helena for Friday, January 30, 1987. Legislative Day activities will kick off on Thursday evening, January 29, with the favorite western ouffiet for legislators and guests at the State Library from 7-9 p.m. A full day of activities has been planned on Friday including a workshop on legislative strategy and visits with legislators.

Noting that this will be "one of the toughest legislative sessions in years," MLA Legislative Committee Chair Deborah Schlesinger is urging friends of all types of libraries to make a special effort to attend this year. Invitations, schedules, and registration forms are being distributed by the Montana Library Association. If you need extras, please contact Co-chairs Millie Sullivan, 2853 Village Road, Helena, MT 59601, phone: 227-6977; or Ellen Newberg, 925 Burlington Avenue, Billings, MT 59102, phone: 245-5483.



Federation Option Paper

This fall the Library Commission requested that the State Librarian prepare an option paper on ways to provide the "basic library services" now being supplied by the federations and to identify other ways of implementing the intent of the Coal Severance Tax statute. The request was

made by the Commission because coal severance tax revenues, which fund the six public library federations, are estimated to seriously decrease for both FY 1987 and the FY 1988-89 biennium.

The paper which was prepared included legal, financial, political and historical considerations and summarized the commitment of public libraries to the existing

federations. Input for the paper was solicited from public libraries and the federation coordinators in Montana.

A copy of this option paper is available and may be requested from Sheila Cates at Montana State Library, 444-3115.



Attorney General's Opinion

On November 13, 1986 Mike Greeley, the Attorney General, issued an opinion of importance to public libraries in Montana.

In this opinion, Greeley said a board of county commissioners does not have the authority to modify the decision of county library trustees concerning wage and salary amounts; annual library budgets that are adopted; nor can it refuse, within statutory millage limits, to levy some or all of the property taxes necessary to satisfy an annual budget.

This is a far-reaching opinion on Montana's public library law. It reinforces the powers of library boards under MCA 22-1-301 through 22-1-3310. Number 3 of this opinion is most probably affected by the passage of ballot Initiative 105, which has frozen property taxes at the 1986 rates.

Around the State

The MSL has named the Rural Information Specialist for the Kellogg-funded Intermountain Community Learning and Information Services Project (ICLIS). Megan Fite, formerly library media specialist for Colstrip School District 19, is the State Library staff member who will work with the community specialists in Hamilton and Libby, Nansu Roddy and Karen Locke, and Dr. Alan Goodman, MSU, Montana's project leader. State Librarian Sara Parker serves as a member of the regional Project Management Board. Fite is part of the Library Development Unit at the State Library and can be reached at 444-3115.

The Library Board of the Glasgow City-County Library has hired Tim Mofatt as Library Director and Federation Coordinator. Tim has a Master's of Library Science from the University of Washington Library School. He has experience in Alaska's libraries and also has worked in journalism and publishing.

The State Library has been notified of a party who has an incomplete set of National Geographic magazine, 1914-1964. Libraries interested should contact Harold Chambers, Technical Services, Montana State Library, 444-3115.

The Federation Coordinators, on behalf of "Montana's Libraries", have announced the theme for the Federation-sponsored public information/public awareness campaign. Featuring a man and woman soaring out of a library on their magic carpet, a library card, the theme says: Mind * Flight - Departures Daily. The art work developed for the theme will be featured on posters, postcards and newspaper ads. It is also the basis for television commercials and radio public service announcements. Libraries are reminded the campaign will run January through March with the first week of January and last week of March a blitz in all media. (Posters will be distributed to all public libraries.) For questions contact Steve Thomas, Bozeman Public Library, 587-7785.

Reprint of Letter sent to Public Libraries

Faced with a serious decline in CST revenues and the dependency of federation funding on those revenues, the Montana State Library Commission gave considerable discussion to the option paper, "Providing Basic Library Services for Montana Residents Through Library Federations, Alternatives and Considerations", prepared by the State Librarian. Following that discussion the Commission took action to keep the current structure and as many of the present services as possible. It also recognized the need to consolidate some of the methods of distributing those services.

A motion was approved which included five provisions and applies to the '89 biennium [FY 88 & 89]:

1. The Montana State Library will contract with appropriate entities to provide [the] following services: Reference back-up; Children's services; Consulting services [to libraries].

2. The Montana State Library to be responsible for ILL [Interlibrary Loan], to include purchasing Resource Directories and equipment [for] public libraries that don't have [them].

The Montana State Library shall hold in reserve 20% of projected CST revenue to be allocated near the end of FY 88 for WLN Recon or equipment grants, or [other purposes as determined by the Commission].

4. The State Librarian under the Administrative Rules shall negotiate contracts in the best interest of providing service to the people of Montana. MSLC shall ratify contracts.

5. \$60,000 [shall be used] for preservation of the federation structure. (This funds continued meetings of the federation members and preserves the Advisory boards).

The State Library Commission and State Librarian will be working closely with local libraries and the federations to implement these changes by July 1, 1987.

December 11 Commission Meeting Synopsis

Other business at the Commission meeting on December 11 included approval of the Advisory Council's recommendation for funding the state LSCA literacy project. The Commission accepted the Council's recommendation and awarded the \$10,000 LSCA project to Missoula Public Library.

In other action, the Commission approved the Federation Coordinators' recommendations, as defined by the State Librarian, regarding a statewide committee to prepare library law recommendations for the 51st Legislature. A statewide committee of seven designated representatives will work as a whole and in two subcommittees: (1) preparation of a new federation law; (2) revision of public library laws. The process will begin in the spring of 1987.

Officers elected for 1987 were: Mary Hudspeth, Chair, and Abe Abramson, Vice-Chair.

Montana State Library News

is published bi-monthly by the
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